

A SHORT
T R E A T I S E
ON THE
REQUISITES
FOR
C O N F I R M A T I O N,
DRAWN UP
FOR THE USE OF HIS PRIVATE PUPILS:
WITH
AN INTRODUCTORY
DISSERTATION
ON THE
S A C R A M E N T;

BY THE
Rev. W. LANGFORD, D.D. *K.*

CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO HIS MAJESTY, CANON OF
WINDSOR, AND UNDER MASTER OF ETON SCHOOL.

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A SHORT
T R E A T I S E
ON THE
REQUISITES
FOR
CONFIRMATION.



A

TREATISE, &c.

IT was a practice in the Jewish church for all its young Members, at the age of twelve years, personally to appear in the temple at Jerusalem, and, in the presence of the congregation, to take upon themselves the promises, made in their name at their *Circumcision*, to obey the law of Moses. After which, the sponsors, or those who were sureties at their initiation to Judaism, were considered as discharged from their duty.

THE Christian church, being built upon the Jewish, hath adopted the same plan; especially as those, who constitute a great part of its society, are generally introduced into it at a very early age; before they can be supposed

to have any notion of the solemn vows, which were made in their names, as the new disciples of Christ.

THIS taking upon themselves the obligations, required at first of the representatives, is called *Confirmation*, or the ratifying in their own persons, what was engaged for them by their godfathers and godmothers.

THE ceremony of confirmation appears to have been early introduced by the apostles themselves. For when the Samaritans were baptized by Philip, they sent Peter and John, *to lay hands on them*.

ST. PAUL also confirmed the Ephesians, after their conversion, “ by laying on of hands.”

FROM hence this conclusion is drawn, that their new character, as believers in Christ, was not considered as complete; till the Apostles themselves had, by an outward sign, conferred upon them the gift of the Holy Ghost.

FOR we read that *this* accompanied the blessing given by the Apostles—“ The Holy Ghost came upon them,” or, they were on a

sudden enlightened by an inspiration from heaven.

THIS wonderful and instantaneous gift of the Holy Ghost, when the Church was sufficiently established, ceased, as no longer necessary. The ordinary graces, or virtuous habits of mind, took place of the extraordinary illuminations.

THE ceremony of confirmation hath therefore remained among the successors of the Apostles, not as a means of conferring the wonderful gifts of the holy spirit; but with a view to prepare the hearts of christian children for the receiving of its ordinary graces, or good dispositions.

AND what can be more proper or better suited to this purpose, than a rite, which more immediately brings to the thoughts of the young (at an age when the passions are beginning to exert their influence, and they are going forth into the business and cares of the world) their situation, as the disciples of Christ; and reminds them upon what terms alone, they can call themselves the children

of God, or the objects of their Redeemer's atonement ?

BEFORE this hath been duly considered by them, the name of Christian, which they bear, hath been the effect of accident only ; or as they have been born in a country, where the religion of Christ is professed. When they shall have made themselves sufficiently acquainted with the conditions of the covenant, and after a full and serious reflection are desirous to continue under the character of Christians ; then, for the first time, have they a right to their name.

THIS observation I may apply to you, who are now called by your Church to a ratification of your baptismal vow. That you are called Christians is to be referred to these two causes, viz. That you have been born in a land, where christianity is professed ; and of parents, who wished that you should be brought up in the same faith.—At a very early age you were initiated into the general society of Christians ; and had a name given you, expressive of the new character you then assumed. To this time therefore you have

had no other title to your Christian profession, than what you have derived from your parents or country.

THE church however (to which you belong) is not satisfied with this accidental mark: it requires, that all, who are of its persuasion, should give a more significant proof, that they are in mind, what they profess in word; and therefore at an age, when reason is supposed to have its power over the mind, calls upon its young members to review the promises given, when they were first baptised; and in a public manner to acknowledge themselves bound to believe, and to do, what the doctrines of the Christian faith require. After this their character may be said to begin.

THIS open acknowledgment of the baptismal vow is once only to be made. For as the ceremony of baptism is once performed, and no more; so the avowal of your baptism is once only required; or confirmation (which is nothing more than a ratification of the vow) can be but once necessary. They therefore, who wish this ceremony to be repeated,

seem not to have sufficiently considered the design of its institution.

THE duties of a Christian consist in a belief of the great author of the religion himself, Jesus Christ ; a knowledge of the service he requires ; and a resolution to perform it, all the days of his life.

JESUS CHRIST was the only begotten son of God, who, having existed from all eternity with the Father in the same divine nature, came down from his seat in heaven, both to make atonement by his blood for the sins of mankind, and to abolish the power and dominion of Satan.—As the design therefore of his coming was to destroy the works of the devil ; a renouncing of him and his works is one of the first requisitions of the Gospel : and therefore this stands as the first promise given by all sponsors at the baptism of children—“ They are to renounce the devil and all his works.” It is obvious to remark, that when these vows are taken upon Christians, in their own persons at their confirmation, the same must continue the first principle of their duty.

“To renounce the devil” is to abstain from, and to abhor those sinful gratifications, which he, as the father of all wickedness, shall at any time suggest.

By the Devil, *i. e.* the *accuser* of men to God, derived from a Greek word, signifying an *accuser* or *reviler*, we mean that evil spirit, who, in consequence of his rebellion, was cast forth from the mansions of heaven; and being condemned to a perpetual exclusion from that seat of happiness, has made it his great object to involve man, since his first creation, in the same misery.

As nothing is so likely to prevail upon us to accept the poisonous cup, which he offers under the mask of pleasure, as the idleness of a vain and voluptuous life; we are required to disclaim the pomps and vanities of the world, the empty gratifications of sin, that are recommended by the vicious part of mankind. And as a wicked life (though it may be confirmed by an imitation of bad examples) has its rise in the heart, and the encouragement of evil thoughts; we are now directed to check the desires of the flesh, or to resist

the sollicitations of passions, a compliance with which may lead us into misery.

AFTER this an assent is required to the Articles of the Christian Faith, or the compendium of religion, which we, of the * Protestant Church, have established as the rule of our Faith; and which is called (not so much from any certainty that the Apostles drew it up, as that it contains the apostolical doctrines) the Creed.

THIS consists of three principal parts, containing in the first place, what we believe concerning the great Author of the Universe, God, and his attributes.—2dly, concerning his son Jesus, his birth, death, resurrection and ascension into heaven.—3dly, concerning the Holy Ghost, and his offices. To which are subjoined other doctrines, as matters of belief; though the most ancient Creeds went no further than a declaration of faith,

* Protestants were so denominated from the Protest entered into by the Elector of Saxony, the Landgrave of Hesse, and other Members of the Diet, held at Spire, April 19, A. D. 1529, against the enemies of Luther, respecting the holding a general Council.

in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.—Such as *the holy Catholick Church*, or the universal society of holy men, consisting both of those, who now are, or are gone before us, and of those, who are yet to come: *the Communion of Saints*, or the fellowship of holy persons with God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost: *the forgiveness of sins*, or the remission of punishment due to sin, through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ: *the resurrection of the body*, or the rising again of all men in the same bodies, those of the faithful to be glorified; of the wicked to be capable of everlasting punishment: *the life everlasting*, or a state of happiness or misery to come, according to the good or evil actions of men in their present existence.

THE next thing promised at our baptism is this, that we will keep God's commandments; or that we will do our best endeavours, the grace of God assisting us, to perform his will.

THIS will of God is delivered in what we commonly call the Ten Commandments; which, though they were given by God to the Jews, are binding to Christians: for Jesus

“ came not to destroy, but to fulfil the law.”

THESE Commandments contain our duty to God, to ourselves, and to our neighbour. They are divided into two tables; the first ends with that, which concerns the sabbath; the second begins with that, which requires us to honour our parents. One general remark may be made upon them all: That, when one thing is required, its contrary is forbidden, and vice versa.

AFTER this follows in the Catechism a kind of compendium of duty, according to the spirit of the commandments, both to the Deity and to all mankind.

THESE are the particulars required of our Godfathers and Godmothers in our names, at our baptism. To these are subjoined the means of receiving the grace of God for the performance of them,—*Prayer*.

PRAYER is a calling upon God for his gracious assistance for the attainment of good, and prevention of evil.

As no form can be so proper or comprehensive, as that which Jesus appointed for the

use of his disciples ; the church directs its members at all times to apply to their maker, in the Lord's prayer.

THIS consists of three parts ; 1st. an invocation or preface, "*Our Father, which art in Heaven ;*"—2d. in petitions, respecting the Glory of God ; *Hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven ;*—3d. Our own particular wants ; *Give us this day our daily bread, And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us, And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil ;*—a doxology or conclusion to the glory of God ; *For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory ;*"—which is designed to remind us, that all we pray for, and all we do, is to be directed to one end, " The Glory of God."*

THE latter part of the Church Catechism teaches, by what other means the grace of

* The prayer is ended by one word, Amen, which expresses an assent to all things, which are prayed for. It is properly a ~~Hebrew~~ word, which signifies truly or verily.

God is conveyed to us, viz. The worthy partaking of the Holy Sacraments.

THE Sacraments are two,—*Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*.

To constitute a Sacrament there must be an outward sign of an inward grace; a divine institution, the means to confer the gift, and a pledge or assurance of it.

THESE, as it were component parts, are to be found in those two only, which we call Baptism and the Supper of our Lord. The five, therefore, added by the church of Rome, *Confirmation, Penance, extreme Unction, Matrimony* and *Ordination*, as failing in the essential parts, cannot be admitted.

Baptism is a Sacrament, because it has an outward sign (water) of an inward grace (regeneration); an appointment from Jesus himself, “Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;” the means of conferring grace.—For Baptism is to regenerate us. *John* iii. 5.

THE emblem water (as used by all nations, and even by Heathens as a token of purity)

signifies our spiritual cleansing by the blood of Christ. As our bodies are washed from their pollutions by water, so are our souls purified by the blood of Jesus. It is therefore necessary to the administration of this Sacrament.

THE inward and spiritual grace, exhibited in this Sacrament, is a restoration from the fallen state, (the penalty of Adam's transgression) to the favor of God by the death of the Redeemer.

THE preparation for Baptism is repentance and faith: a renouncing of sin, and a belief in the truth of the Christian religion.

As these cannot (though required in all, who are baptized) be expected from children; Sponsors engage to the church, that at the years of discretion those, whom they represent, shall believe and repent.

THAT children should, under this promise, be admitted to Baptism, is agreeable to the Jewish law; by which children were received into the covenant, at eight days old, by the ceremony of circumcision.

THE Lord's Supper is also most truly a Sacrament; as it exhibits a sign (bread and wine) of an inward grace, (the redemption of the world) and was instituted by Christ himself, a short time before his passion, into the place of the Paschal Supper among the Jews. Its design was this, viz. that all mankind, in succeeding ages, might have in this Sacrament a memorial, or lively representation of his death.

THE signs in this Sacrament (bread and wine) are emblems of the breaking of the body, and the pouring out of the blood of Christ. These are eat and drunk (not, as the Romanists teach in their doctrine of transubstantiation, as actually converted into the very body and blood of the Saviour) but, merely as figures and tokens.

THE thing signified by these emblems is the sacrifice of Christ; which to the faithful is as efficacious in the representation only, as if the body of him was really again broken, and the blood poured out.

THE benefits arising from this Sacrament are these; the giving us at all times the

comfortable assurance, that our redemption is accomplished; and thereby creating in us a joyful confidence, that we shall be partakers of his atonement. This persuasion carries us on through all the difficulties of life, and encourages us to resist all such temptations to sin, as may interrupt the course of our duty.

THIS Sacrament (which is administered only to those who are of a riper age, and therefore supposed to have the power of exercising their reason) is not to be approached without a due care and attention.

IN the celebration of this ordinance we declare ourselves the disciples of Christ. But to be the true followers of him, we must forsake the path of sin.—Whether we be thus disposed; or have actually renounced a life of wickedness, is to be the subject of frequent enquiry. Without self examination, there can be no true repentance; and without repentance, our approaching the Supper of our Lord is little less than mockery.

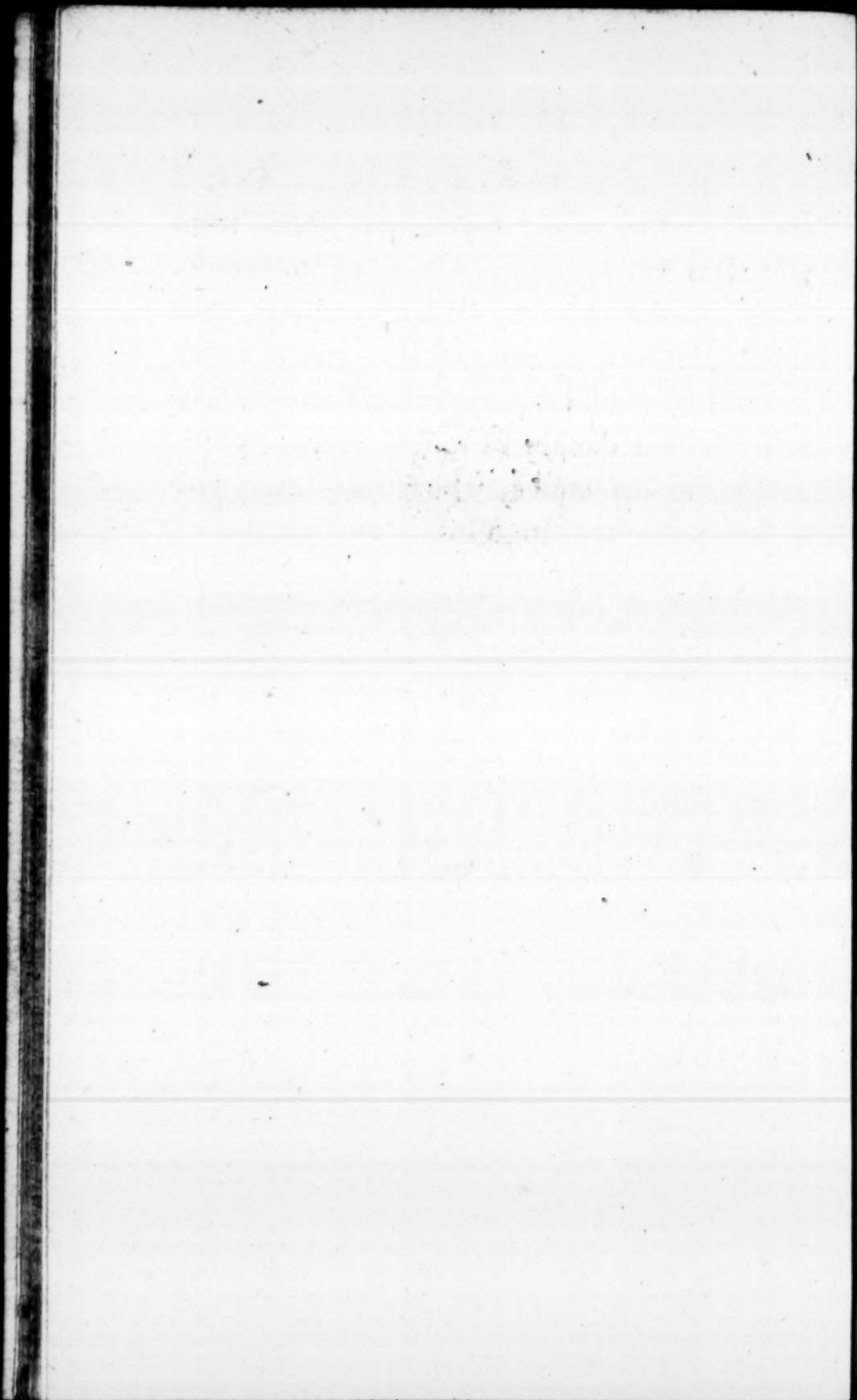
THE church requires, that all its members should first ratify the vows of their Baptism,

before they become partakers of the Lord's table. If, however, it should so happen, that from circumstances, the rite of confirmation should have been omitted; it allows those, who have made themselves acquainted with the Christian Faith, to communicate publicly at the Lord's table, though they shall not have publicly confirmed the obligations of Baptism.

I HAVE, in this brief manner, endeavoured to explain the Church Catechism as preparatory to your Confirmation, and hope some, not unuseful, knowledge may arise from it to any of you, who shall have given it attention. As you are called upon, at this time, to take upon yourselves the promises, given by your sponsors, "that you should become the servants and soldiers of Christ;" I think it my duty to exhort you to enlist under his banner, and to resolve, by the grace of God, (*i. e.* the free favor of his spirit to be obtained by prayer and a right use of the gift) to keep his commandments;—for I must add, upon this alone depends your salvation.

AT this time the bleffings of the Gospel are offered to you : if you put them from you, you will have yourselves only to accuse. That you therefore may walk worthy of your calling, let me recommend it to you to apply to God by constant prayer; and that you may be in the lefs danger of miscarrying, to cultivate those principles, which may teach you to pafs your lives in sobriety and virtue.

End of the Treatise.



AN INTRODUCTORY
DISSERTATION
ON THE
SACRAMENT.



A

DISSERTATION, &c.

ALL societies of men, whether religious or civil, have been connected together by certain forms, and those who have laid claim to their advantages, have been bound by some covenant or mode of obligation.

THUS the Roman soldiers took an oath of service and obedience to their commander; by this they were engaged not to forsake his standard, nor desert their post in the time of danger.

THIS obligation was expressed by a word in their language (*Sacramentum*) translated by the moderns Sacrament or oath.

THE same expression, having the same sense to convey, is made use of by the society

C

of Christians, to signify that bond, by which they are held together, and under which they are to perform a duty of obedience to the Author of their Religion.

THERE are two lights, in which mankind are to consider themselves,—first, as made by a great Creator, and secondly, redeemed by a Saviour.

1. THE former knowledge is communicated to them by their own consciences, by the works of the Creator, so evident in all parts of the world, and by the acknowledgment of ages.

2. THE latter is drawn from Revelation.

REVERELATION is the will of that Creator, made known to his creatures, at different times and in different manners.

THIS Revelation is continued to man by record; which, if it be supported by authenticity, must be believed in, as containing Truth.

THE book called the Bible is that record. The proof of its authenticity is its antiquity, and the reception it has met with in different ages. Had there been reason to suppose, that

it was a forgery, at the time it was first written, it would have been then disputed; and in after times, from evidences collected by learning and argument, been confuted. No such rejection, from these grounds, has taken place; consequently it is confided in, as a treasure of real communication.

THERE is no method, by which the knowledge of things, which have passed in antecedent times, can be delivered down from generation to generation among men, but history. This rests upon credibility; credibility upon testimony. If the Bible hath this authority for its support, it is at least equal to any other book, and claims, even upon that ground only, the belief of its readers.

OF this book Moses was the principal author; and, in the five first books, called the *Pentateuch*, he gave an account to the nation, over which he presided as the lawgiver, of the first formation and peopling of the world; and (what was connected with that people as the chosen of God) of the preservation of the true worship and belief in a

God, by a succession of descendants in a peculiar family.

THE history given by him of the creation was designed to refute all the wild and extravagant notions of the cause of all things seen in the visible world, which from the corruptions of tradition had prevailed in the idolatrous countries.

AFTER he had described the manner, by which the heaven and the earth were made, he proceeds to speak of the first inhabitant, Man, who was placed upon the latter. He describes his state, and the terms of that state; his disobedience to his Maker, and his fall: He mentions the cause of that fall, a yielding to temptation. He adds what that temptation was, and who was the author of it. In the first place, the prospect of forbidden knowledge; in the latter, an animal, made by a malevolent Being, the vehicle of mischief by transgression. He does not proceed to give any particular account of the nature of that Being, who was thus the author of disobedience, and its punishment:—little has been communicated upon this subject, as totally

unnecessary, in all probability, for man to know, and of too mysterious a nature for his limited powers to comprehend. All that can be collected upon this wonderful and incomprehensible doctrine is from scattered parts of subsequent writers; such as St. Peter and St. John, from whom it may be understood, that a Being of an order superior to man, and a spirit, moved others of the same order to an act of rebellion against the Supreme Being; and that he was cast with them, from a high rank of glory, into a place of punishment for his offence.

WHAT that punishment is, or where endured, is at present unknown; nor is it material for any to understand. An enemy to God, he became an enemy to his works: and as the highest proof he could give of his opposition to the will of his superior, he determined to destroy in his sight, what had come forth by creation so perfect from his hands, the new-made man. To this is to be ascribed the first contrivance of the fall, and its ultimate success.

It is not for man to search into the counsels of God, nor to enquire, for what wise reasons the unhappy issue of that temptation was allowed. It is only to be lamented in its consequences: and the proneness of all the descendants of the first man to sin, is a proof, that such sad success did attend that temptation.

I HAVE dwelt thus long upon this particular subject, as I consider it the groundwork of the necessity there was, that there should be a Redemption, or a restoration of man to that state, from which he had fallen through the Tempter, by a mediation. Unless there be a persuasion, that this was necessary; all that is built upon it must vanish into nothing.

THIS, I hope, (allowance being made for the brief manner, in which it hath been stated) being established to your satisfaction, I shall proceed to what Moses further delivered, as a great truth in his history.

THE historian, after he had recorded the circumstance of the fall of man, added an express promise given by his Creator, that vengeance should be taken of the evil spirit,

who had at first drawn him off from his obedience, and thereby brought upon him misery and punishment. He mentions first of all, the general promise, that a Descendant should arise to the sinner in a future age, who should soften the sentence of death, (the dreadful penalty of transgression) and obtain dominion over the malign Being, who first, by his art, brought guilt upon Adam.—“ The seed of the woman, &c.” *Gen. 3.*

IN the course of his history, Moses shewed, that this promise was kept alive among the children of the first man, from generation to generation: That, though wickedness prevailed, and its punishment (the flood) followed, yet that this was renewed: That as the knowledge of the true God was yet preserved in a small part of the human race; the expectation of the deliverer, who was to be sent, was preserved also: That Abraham obtained the renewal of this promise, as a reward for his faithfulness, that “ in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed.”

THE writer afterwards mentions a particular branch of Abraham’s family, the family of

Jacob. In the mouth of this man, (who was called the *Patriarch*, or the head of the families) he places a prediction, respecting the time in which this promise should be accomplished. "The sceptre shall not depart, &c." *Gen.* xlviii. 9. He also adds the prophecy of Balaam, &c.

BEFORE his own death he foretels, that a Prophet (meaning the Messiah) should be raised up to the Hebrews like unto himself.

THUS much for the history of Moses; from which is to be drawn the certainty of a promise of redemption in general terms, of a family appointed for the purpose, and of a period, when it should come to pass.

As years went on, and the season more nearly approached, when the person, who was to bring about the redemption, was to appear; holy men were occasionally raised up with the wonderful power of foretelling the very place, where this person should be seen, and also the circumstances of his character. These particulars are to be found in the writings of the greater and lesser prophets; but principally

in those of Isaiah, who is therefore called the evangelical Prophet.

HERE ends the Old Testament. It was necessary to say thus much upon the Old; because, without this, there would be wanting an introduction to the New.

THE New Testament contains an account of the accomplishment of those important promises, which were made at different times, and by different persons in the Old. It gives a history of Jesus, *i. e.* Saviour and Christ, the promised Messiah; or of him, in whose person all predictions and figures, respecting the Deliverer, so long looked for, were brought to their completion.

THIS book (claiming the belief of all its readers from the certainty of its testimony) records the first coming into the world of this extraordinary person, and likewise every circumstance respecting his life and doctrines.—It also gives a minute detail of events, which passed during his continuance upon earth; and at the particular time, when the purpose, for which he was made man, was to be fulfilled, his death.

THAT satisfaction was to be made to God by this atonement alone, is to be collected from the sentence itself, which was at first pronounced upon Adam; "Thou shalt die;" and from sacrifices also appointed from the earliest age, and the slaughter of victims in the Jewish worship, which throughout were typical or figurative.

As this then was the great end of our Saviour's mission, and the earnest to mankind, that they should thereby be restored to that state of favor, in which they were originally made, the writers of the Gospel have been particularly exact in recording every minute circumstance, which might establish a conviction, that he did certainly die.

To commemorate this death, and in this death, the redemption of the world, a ceremony hath been appointed, called by believers in him, the Eucharist, or thankful remembrance, and the Lord's Supper.

It is very well known, that the sense of obligations is soon obliterated from the minds of men; and that ceremonies are of great use in reviving in the heart those necessary im-

pressions, which, want of attention and the business of the world too often deface.

FOR this reason; the Jews were required, every year, not merely to celebrate, but to represent under symbols, the deliverance of their forefathers from their bondage in Egypt.

JESUS CHRIST built his religion upon the Jewish. He also required, that those, who were delivered by him from a greater captivity, that of Satan and Death, should often exhibit the means, by which this was obtained, by an ordinance or outward sign.

FOR this purpose, on the day preceding his death, he called together those, who had been the companions of his life; and instituted a formal act of remembrance of himself, for all he was to suffer, and the benefits which they were to receive.

IT was part of the ceremony, at the conclusion of the Paschal Feast, for the master of the family to call for a piece of bread and a cup of wine. These he blessed and distributed to the rest of the company, as a mark of friendship and social affection.

THE night preceding the death of Christ, was the Jewish Passover. He kept that feast with his friends, and embraced the opportunity of establishing in the last part of the ceremony, that institution, which was to supersede the former rite, and to perpetuate to all ages the remembrance of his sufferings. He took bread and wine;—these, he declared should thenceforth be regarded as emblems of his body and his blood; emblems only: for real flesh and real blood they could not be. They could not (as the Roman Catholics teach) be transubstantiated, *i. e.* so changed from their natural substance, as to pass into another. They could be nothing more, than a representation.

UNDER this act, the disciples were required to remember their master; their master, who was to die for them, and, by that death, to obtain their redemption.

THE disciples, who were present, were Jews, and consequently well knew, that it was not a matter of choice with them, whether they should observe the institution, or treat it with disregard.—The celebration of

the Passover could not be dispensed with. Whoever neglected the ceremonies of that feast, was cut off from the people. Hence it must appear, that the Eucharist is of perpetual obligation; and that, as Christ instituted this in remembrance of himself, when the Passover was done away: it must follow, that there is as absolute a necessity for compliance with the latter, as during so many ages, for a less cause, there had been for the former.— Jesus said in a way of command, “do this in remembrance of me;” and the Apostle St. Paul by using the words “as oft as ye drink this cup,” implied, that the ceremony should be often repeated.

To the necessity of thus conforming to the injunction of the Saviour, is to be added the manner, by which it may be performed.— Times and countries vary in their forms; and modes in all things are adapted to the age, in which they are to be done. Thus in modern days the particular posture of celebrating the Eucharist is not agreeable to the primitive appointment. But, wherever the intention

and manner are accompanied with reverence, the inward mind reconciles the outward act.

NEXT to the manner is to be considered the immediate design of performing this service. This again may be illustrated by reference to the Passover.—A Jew in that ordinance did not merely commemorate the redemption from Egyptian slavery; but at the time of his partaking of the ceremony, supposed, that he was then more immediately declaring himself *one of the people of God*, who had brought out his forefathers with a mighty hand and a stretched out arm. The act was a public declaration, that he acknowledged himself to be a Jew.

IN celebrating the Christian Passover, a similar design is kept in view. The partakers of this communion make the same tacit acknowledgment, that they are Christians; that they are believers in Jesus, their master: and publicly profess, that they claim a title to that glorious name, by which they are called.

NEXT in order, follow the immediate benefits arising from this institution. Independent of the chief and glorious privilege, that

Christians have a right to claim by the sacrifice and death of their redeemer, in another life ; assurance is given, and a sensible persuasion arises in the breast of the true believer, that, by a due observance of this rite, which was commanded by his Lord, he shall not only obtain the ultimate blessing, Salvation : but by shewing himself the servant of his Master shall receive, in this world, from him every aid and support, which may be necessary for the discharge of his duty. He is taught to believe, that, from a regular compliance with this law, he shall be enlightened by the divine Grace : *i. e.* by a secret communication of inward power, which may create in his mind worthy dispositions, and arm him against the assaults of evil, and the world.

AFTER having in this compendious way, considered the necessity of a redemption ; the accomplishment of it ; the manner of commemorating it, as in the Eucharist, and the blessings resulting from it ; I am, naturally led to consider, what is the proper state of mind, which Christians ought to bring with them, when they are more immediately en-

gaged in this act of religion. This is usually called *Preparation*.

THE true preparation is certainly habitual piety, or the encouraging in the mind, from the earliest years of life, a desire to live in a regular obedience to the law of God. For in celebrating the Eucharist, an open confession is made, that the partakers of it are the servants of Christ. Two masters cannot be served: and therefore, he who professes himself a follower of Christ, cannot be a slave to the *evil Spirit*; to destroy whose dominion, the death, which he commemorates, was undergone.

WHAT is necessary for the happiness of life itself, and a fearless expectation of death, is the best preparation. This is equally essential for either state. But since, from commerce with the world, and the violence of the passions, a deviation from innocence and duty is day by day lamented by all men; stated times of preparation are useful and expedient. For these have a power to bring the mind back to its proper frame and temper; they draw it off from negligence, on the one hand, and from

inconsistent gratifications on the other; they represent to the heart, that if the feast is to be attended, it is highly necessary, that every guest should put on the required garment. In short; it reminds every Christian, that to make himself worthy of appearing before his Master, it is an indispensable requisite, that he should carry that only in his character, which is suitable to his service.

THE celebrating the Eucharist, is no less an act of gratitude in the upright, than of repentance in the sinner; and where the latter is sincere, consisting of sorrow for past offences, and a desire of amendment for the days to come; so gracious is the master, who furnishes this entertainment, that he excludes not such from his table.

IT now may be asked, what are the causes which indispose the generality of Christians, from becoming guests at this banquet.—These are in general, *a determined resolution to forsake no vicious course*, to which they may have been addicted; and a misconception of words to be found in Scripture, which speak of the consequences to the unworthy

receiver. As to the former, the very design of the Eucharist is a bar of exclusion from the ordinance. No man can presume to appear before his Maker and Saviour, as a Christian believer, who serves other masters, Sin and Satan.

To such no answer is to be given. When they shall see their folly, and shew repentance; then we trust, that, though late, the mercy of God, through the intercession of his Son, will yet be extended to them also.

THE Greek word in St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians, improperly translated *Damnation*, hath been a discouragement to many, and an absolute cause to the ignorant of fear and terror. They have been affrighted by the term, and therefore turned away from the institution itself.

It should however be known, that St. Paul was addressing those, who had such unworthy notions of the Eucharist, as to make no distinction between that, and an intemperate banquet. He told them, that they must be answerable for such conduct; that they must appear in trial for such an abuse: and

as a proof that he did not mean an eternal exclusion from future happiness, he adds, that, in consequence of their profanation, troubles of this life were brought upon them, such as disease and death.

THE same offence cannot in these days be committed; and therefore, so far is the everlasting *damnation* from being to be dreaded, that even the temporary is not to be expected.

IN short, according to my faith, according to my knowledge, according to my trust and confidence, I believe, that every man, who endeavours to make himself acquainted with the design of this institution, and to frame his life, according to the requisites which it presupposes; such as belief in the Saviour; a desire to live as he has commanded; a sorrowful remembrance of sins committed, and a wish, by the assistance of God, which is to be obtained, through the mediation of Christ Jesus, by earnest and constant prayer, to lead a good life; will, at all times, whether by an habitual or actual preparation, be a *worthy partaker* of the Lord's Supper.

DID young men in particular consider, what a serious admonition, the frequent attendance at the Lord's Supper will give them; so as to alarm them against the approach of evil, and encourage them in the pursuit of good; they would not be surpris'd, that it should be recommended to them in the season of their youth; for this alone is to be the support of their manhood, the alleviation of old age, and the anchor of confidence in the hour of their death.

THAT what has been said may have its weight upon your minds, and tend to your peace, both now and hereafter, is the sincere wish of your faithful Friend.



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